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## **Governor Jan Brewer Announces Disaster Designation Funding for Those Affected by Wildfires, Flooding and Drought**

### *Federal Emergency Loans Will Help Ranchers and Other Landowners*

PHOENIX – Governor Jan Brewer today announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has granted her request for a Secretarial disaster designation for Arizona farmers and ranchers impacted by damaging drought, wildfires and winds this year.

Today's announcement follows a USDA disaster designation granted last month for the San Carlos Apache Reservation and contiguous counties in northeastern Arizona. The new designation extends this federal aid to qualifying farmers and ranchers in Cochise, Santa Cruz and Pima counties.

"Farmers and ranchers in rural Arizona are hurting, so I'm appreciative of the USDA's prompt response to my request for agricultural aid," said Governor Brewer. "Low-interest loans like those made available by this program will help our agricultural communities pick up the pieces following what has been a devastating year of drought and wildfire."

Continued dry conditions and high winds this spring and summer resulted in wildfires that consumed nearly 1 million acres across the state. The hardship for Arizona farmers and ranchers is real. The USDA declarations today and last month now make assistance available for qualifying farm operators on the San Carlos Apache Reservation and in Apache, Gila, Graham, Cochise, Greenlee, Santa Cruz, Navajo, Pima and Pinal counties.

"We're really pleased the Secretary has seen fit to make this declaration for the state," said Don Butler, Director of the Arizona Department of Agriculture. "The timing is really important. These folks are working hard to overcome what Mother Nature dealt. This can help them get back on their feet."

The USDA disaster designation will allow qualifying farm operators in the affected areas to receive low-interest emergency loans from the Farm Service Agency (FSA) and the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments (SURE) program. Farmers in eligible counties have eight months

from the date of a Secretarial disaster designation to apply for emergency loan assistance. Individuals seeking additional application information can contact their local Farm Service Agency office.

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